Historical Account

OF

MANNEKIN-PIS

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Oak Street, 2, Brussels

HISTORICAL HOUSE OF

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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF

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(taken from authentic doceuments)

Towards the middle of the twelfth century (1141) our hero was born at Brussels, in the Palace of the dukes of Brabant

His father **Godfrey II** surnamed **the Young**, had been for

some time at war with his most formidable vassals, the powerful family **Berthoud,** Lords of Grimberghe, refused to recognise him as their suzerain.

Godfrey II did nol live long enough to punish these rebels. He died at Louvain in 1142, when his son was scarcely a year old.

The latter, recognised Duke of Brabant under the name of **Godfrey III,** was by his father's will placed under the guar-

dians hip of four worthy lords: **Jean of Bierbeck, Henry of Diest, Arnold of Wemmel and Gerard of Wesemaele.**

This choise of Guardian was made the pretext or a new revolt but their real aim was to gras the inheritanse of the young child.

Helped by troops sent by the count of Flanders the men of Brabant went forth to the plains of **Ransbeck** 6 miles from Brussels to fight there

with Berthoud's soldiers (1143).

The Brabant soldier were led by the guardians of **Godfrey III**.

To encourage the Brabant troops one of their knights, **Arnold of Crainheim** insisted on the Duchess Lutgard Godfrey III, mother allowing the young Duke to be present on the field of battle.

The young mother although fearing for the life of her child, consented not daring to refuse this chance of success

to the Brabant troops.

The cradle of the young Duke, sheltered unter the Brabant standard, was suspended from the branche of a willow the Duchess Lutgard and some old warriors guarded the child the battle commenced.

A very natural incident, occured during the affray : from the cradle was to be seem flowing a limpid stream... At the sight of il the soldiers cried : « **Het Manneken pist** ». Lite-

ralle : « The little man is p...g » This made all present go off into bursts of laughter.

The Brabant people decided to erect a monument in memory of this circumstance which co-incided with the winning of the battle.

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Godfrey III, surnamed at first « **Godfrey in the Cradle** », was so remarkable for his bravery that the merited the surname of « **Courageous** ».

Whem he came of age he married Margaret daughter of **Henry II**, of Limbourg (1155).

The statue erected in memory of the victory of Ransbeck was first made of stone; afterwards in 1648, the celebrated sculptor **Duquesnoy**, made a new one in bronze which is the one that is so much admired at present.

The rest of this monument is the work of **Daniel Raessens.**

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Mannekin-Pis has often been coveted by foreigners.

The Englisch at the time of the battle of Fontenay carreed him away to Grammont where he was retaken carried back to Brussels.

In 1774 he disappeared again stolen by the French ; It was found again near the church of Our Lady of good help.

During the night of te 2^{d} of October 1817 the statue, was stolen by a freed convict named

Lycas. After a universal mour ning in the town **Mannekin-Pis,** was found again great rejoicings look place in ho-nour of his. return. It was then that iron railings were placed round the monument so as to prevent the numerous visitors from going too near

As to Lycas he was condem ned to be put in the pilory on the 26^{d} of November 1816.

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All honours due have been

paid to **Mannekin-Pis.**

The archiduke Maximilien-Emmanuel made him knigth of his order gave him rich clothes also a valet to dress him.

The Emperor Peter the Great visited him when passing through Brussels.

In 1847, Louis XV, to revenge **Mannekin-Pis**, of an insult paid in by some French soldiers, gave him a uniform made him knight of his order.

He was knighted by Joseph II

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Mannekin-Pis, has an income most which comes from the inhabitants of Brussels: he possesses a rich wardrobe; and has his own lawyer.

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There is nothing wanting in the glory of **Mannekin-Pis** : he is loved in his native town; poets sing his praises; people come from all parts of the world to visit him; the law

respects his privileges; he is the friend of all governements.

On great feast days **Mannekin-Pis** is clothed in his Louis XV costume.

In 1890 25^{d} anniversary of Leopold II coming to the throne, the edileship of Brussels allowed **Mannèkin-Pis** is offer to visitors wine and lambic beer.

The fountain was magnificently decorated a great crowd came from all ports tot **refresh** themselves at his expense.

N. B. — A copper plate in the Town Museum of Brussels represent the scenes of grief which followed the carrying off of Mannekin Pis by Lycas 1817.

A reprint of this engraving artistically coloured may be had at the bookseller's price 2 francs.

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